

VZCZCXRO0393

RR RUEHAG RUEHAST RUEHDA RUEHDBU RUEHDF RUEHFL RUEHIK RUEHKW RUEHLA
RUEHLN RUEHLZ RUEHROV RUEHSR RUEHVK RUEHYG
DE RUEHBS #0541/01 0471606
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 161606Z FEB 07
FM USEU BRUSSELS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUEAHL/DHS WASHDC
RUEAWJA/DOJ WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BRUSSELS 000541

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [CVIS](#) [PREL](#) [PREF](#) [SMIG](#) [KCRM](#) [SW](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: JHA COUNCIL "RECOGNIZES" SWEDEN'S PROBLEM
WITH IRAQI REFUGEES

REF: 2006 BRUSSELS 04123

SUMMARY

1. EU ministers for Justice and Home Affairs (JHA Council) on February 15 "recognized" Sweden's "particular problem" with its number of Iraqi refugees. Commission Vice-President Frattini promised to look at the situation with a view to presenting proposals to the Council. The German Presidency said ministers agreed to reinforce the EU Agency for the management of the EU's external borders (FRONTEX) by advancing the Rapid Border Intervention Teams project and by contributing helicopters, patrol boats and equipment to the Agency in anticipation of an influx of refugees across EU borders this spring. Police and judicial cooperation issues discussed at the Council have been reported SEPTEL. Full text of Council conclusions has been transmitted to EUR/ERA. END SUMMARY.

IRAQI REFUGEES IN EU COUNTRIES

2. Speaking at the final press conference of the February 15 JHA Council, German Interior Minister/Council chair Schduble said the Council "recognized the particular problem" raised by the Swedish delegation with the large number of Iraqi refugees in its country. Sweden, which takes in the highest number of refugees in the EU, wants its EU partners to share the burden and provide funding to staes neighboring Iraq. More than 9,000 Iraqis sought asylum in Sweden last year and Iraqis now represent the second largest group of migrants (after the Finns) in the country. Commission Vice-President Frattini said he would work with the German Presidency to deal with the issue "specifically and in writing" by "submitting ideas to the ministers" before their next meeting in April. Frattini said the number of Iraqi refugees, which was "a problem for Sweden now," could potentially affect other countries as well.

MIGRATION PROBLEMS/FRONTEX

3. The Council reviewed EU efforts to strengthen cooperation with non-EU countries in the fight against illegal migration through the development of cooperation incentives, the conclusion of partnership agreements on migration and development,

and the promotion of "circular migration" (allowing temporary stays for the purpose of work, training or education). The debate took place on the basis of a note from the German Presidency advocating practical support to countries of origin and transit for capacity-building within the framework of region-specific cooperation platforms for migration and development. Commission Vice-President Frattini noted that Development Commissioner Michel, during his recent visit to Mali, had promised to establish a first "common center" in Africa with a view to providing potential migrants with information about legal forms of migration to Europe and the dangers of illegal channels.

14. With a reference to the anticipated influx of refugees onto the EU's Southern borders in the spring, Schduble reported "a great deal of enthusiasm" about the idea of reinforcing the European border management agency (FRONTEX). More specifically, Schduble and Frattini said ministers agreed to move ahead with the proposed Rapid Border Intervention Teams to be composed of member state experts that would be sent by FRONTEX to those EU countries having to cope with an influx of illegal migrants. Frattini was confident that the Council and the European Parliament would be able to reach consensus on the proposed Regulation in time for formal approval at the April JHA Council, thus allowing the scheme to become operational at the beginning of May.

15. Schduble and Frattini said member states would also support FRONTEX in setting up a technical central register known as the "toolbox." The

BRUSSELS 00000541 002 OF 002

Regulation establishing FRONTEX of October 2004 already included provisions on centralized records of technical equipment offered by member states that could be put by the Agency at the disposal of another country facing a difficult situation at its borders. The register will include surveillance aircraft, helicopters, patrol boats and equipment to control borders. Frattini, who had recently been complaining in the media about the lack of cooperation from member states, declared himself confident after the Council meeting that EU governments were prepared to announce further contributions and to provide FRONTEX with the necessary operational equipment. His spokesman said 19 member states had so far made contributions, totaling 13 helicopters and about 50 boats as well as technical equipment for border surveillance. German sources said the Federal Police registered four helicopters for land and sea surveillance, one boat for operations in the North and Baltic Seas and portable thermal imaging cameras.

ENLARGEMENT OF SCHENGEN AREA

16. Meeting in the Mixed Committee with Schengen participants Norway, Iceland and Switzerland, EU Home Affairs ministers:

-- Noted the state of play of the so-called "SISone4all" project (REFTEL) designed to extend the current first-Generation Schengen Information System (SIS1+). The project will allow for the lifting of the EU internal borders with the countries that joined the EU in 2004. Portugal, which initiated this project, indicated it was running well and on time;

-- Reviewed the global rescheduling of the Schengen Information System II (SISII). Commission Vice-President Frattini told a press conference SISII was facing a six-month delay, implying it would be operational by mid-December 2008.

MISCELLANEOUS

17. Among other issues:

-- Vice-President Frattini drew attention to the increasing number of Moldovan citizens applying for Romanian passports;

-- The Council noted two reports concerning trafficking in human beings in connection to the 2006 World Cup in Germany. The reports are available from the Council website:
<http://register.consilium.europa.eu>.

GRAY